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*a Comparative Study of Denmark and Japan*

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**Working paper from Department of Economics, Politics and  
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Crossroad – a Comparative Study of  
Denmark and Japan**

**OASE working paper**

**Saki Ichihara Fomsgaard  
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# **Organic Agriculture Movement at a Crossroad – a Comparative Study of Denmark and Japan**

OASE working paper

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## Preface

The present working paper is a part of the OASE project that has been carried out by a trans disciplinary research group primarily located at the Department of Economics, Politics and Public Administration, Aalborg University, Denmark. The focus of the project has been to conceptualise the evolution of organic agriculture and its relations to the social surroundings, hence the project title: Organic Agriculture in Social Entirety.

The present paper presents studies carried out by Saki Ichihara Fomsgaard<sup>1</sup> founded at her comparative analysis of the organisational evolution in Denmark and Japan. The study systematically put focus on the differences of the organisational evolution in the two countries. It reveals and analyses the gradual inclusion of the Danish organisation into the general agri-political and agri-industrial complex, while the Japanese organisation has indented to stay outside the established systems.

Drafts have successively been discussed in the research group.

Aalborg, March 2006

*Jan Holm Ingemann, head of project*

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<sup>1</sup> Former research assistant attached to OASE and now ph.d. student at Aalborg University





## Abstract

Along with apparent *institutionalisation* of organic agriculture that took place in the last couple of decades, the role of organic agriculture organisations as a social movement actor has increasingly being put into question. Under this circumstance, there can be observed an evidence of “division” among these organisations at being foe or ally to this trend of institutionalisation. Why have such competing trajectories existed in this social movement field? And how have different trajectories evolved throughout the time? Through a comparative study of two organisations related to organic agriculture in Denmark and Japan, it argues that a cause of the discrepancy can be found in fundamentally different formulations of the concepts of organic agriculture and the related movement, and thus different organisational fields in which the organisations have been embedded. It further attests that the process of external institutionalisation, punctuated typically by the establishment of the national organic law, has affected the internal institutionalisation of both organisations, regardless of its self-determined orientation toward pro- or anti- institutionalisation. Yet, how far or how fast the internal institutionalisation process will develop may still depend on the orientation of an organisation, when it potentially can preserve substantial autonomy from such process by refraining itself from creating business-client relationship with its own constituency and from compromising direct participation of its constituency to collective actions.



## Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that a fundamental common ground for organic agriculture movement resides in *confrontation* to the trajectory of conventional agriculture,<sup>2</sup> which emerged with the rise of industrialism<sup>3</sup> seen particularly in the last half of 20<sup>th</sup> century [OASE, 2001, p.3; Lynggaard, 2001; DeLind, 2000; Ingemann, 2000]. Embracing such contentious stance to conventional agriculture, numbers of organic agriculture organisations and groups were established around the 1970s, and they have typically exercised their activism as “outsiders” from the mainstream. In other words, it was an external criticism [Lynggaard, 2001] to the formal institutional sphere that has driven the organic agriculture movement, and this has led activists in this movement to take distance from actors in the established “system,” which, from their point of view, are to be accused of agri-environmental problems.

Yet, the environment around the organic agriculture movement has changed drastically during the past couple of decades. At present, organic agriculture becomes a part of the policy agenda for political institutions in many First world countries and undoubtedly constitutes one of the fastest growing businesses in the global market. Behind this successful story, however, the status of organic agriculture organisations as a “social movement” actor is apparently at stake today. As currently discussed heatedly [Guthman, 2004; OASE, 2000; DeLind, 2000], it appears that the development has implicated a traditional process of conventionalisation, de-radicalisation, and oligarchisation of organic agriculture and significantly, the movement itself.

Considering this aspect this working paper highlights the evidence of division found between organic agriculture organisations particularly at being foe or ally to *institutionalisation*, by understanding this social process as a critical juncture that determines a movement to remain challenger or to become an integrated part of the system [van der Heijden, 1997, 1999; Rucht and Roose, 1999; Offe, 1990; Tarrow, 1989]. While different interpretations are available, “institutionalisation” here primarily refers to the internal and external aspects of organisational change that orient toward a more established institutional life. That is to say, the former, the external institutionalisation, concerns an increasing similarity between an organic agriculture organisation and traditional organisations, while the latter, i.e. the internal institutionalisation, points to an involvement of formal institutions and other types of organisations, which formerly were embedded in different organisational lives, with matters of organic agriculture. Focusing on institutionalisation as such, this paper intends to explain, firstly, why different trajectories of the movement have existed among organic agriculture organisations, and, secondly, how such different trajectories have evolved throughout the time. The present author argues these points through unravelling the general relations between external institutionalisation and development of social movement organisations (SMOs).

The discussions deployed in this paper were based on a comparative study of two organic agriculture organisations, the Danish Association for Organic Farming (Landsforeningen Økologisk Jordbrug: LØJ, established 1981) and the Japan Organic Agriculture Association (JOAA, established 1971), which have demonstrated, and still are demonstrating, most evi-

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<sup>2</sup> “Conventional agriculture” in this study employs the description made by the OASE project that covers the ongoing mainstream agricultural system from the post-war period that has generated tendencies such as industrialisation, specialisation, vertical integration, international standardisation, centralisation/local detachment [OASE., 2001, p.3].

<sup>3</sup> “Industrialism” refers to the ideology that typically adheres to growth in quantity of goods and services produced and to the material well-being which that growth brings [Dryzek, 1997, p.12-13].

dent characteristics of this movement sector in each country. The selection of these particular organisations stemmed from their mutually contradictory paths observed empirically. Among all, the most fundamental was that this target organic agriculture organisation and the movement in Denmark have showed tendencies of integration into a part of the agri-political and agri-industrial system, and thus have undergone a typical institutionalisation process, while those in Japan have still remained relatively grassroots, de-centralised, and unconventional “islands” outside the established systems. In addition to the pursuit of evolution of these organisations and institutionalisation of organic agriculture in these countries, the study presented here put focus on *how the target organic agriculture organisations have formulated organic agriculture and the movement*. Furthermore, two typologies developed by Hanspeter Kriesi were used as its conceptual frame. The overall approach of this study leans towards an interpretative one that takes a moderately critical stance to the often embraced perception of SMOs as rational interest maximizer in social movement researches.<sup>4</sup> While such perception tends to presume SMOs to react *de facto* institutional reality most effectively, the present author construes that the institutional structures of a political system do affect outcomes of social movements, and that SMOs certainly “aim” to pursue a most efficient way to achieve their goals. However in reality, there exist many inefficient organisations, and there could always be a gap between their recognition of what is best and social actuality. Having acknowledged such aspect, this study understands the cognition of SMOs about social reality, such as potential political opportunity, to be an equally powerful factor that determines their decisions, if not “the” most powerful one.

For this objective, the analysis prominently employed qualitative data collected in focus of narratives routinely reproduced by the target organisations. These data were attained from publications, annual reports, and internal newsletters and memos of the target organisations, as well as open- and semi-open structured interviews with several members of these organisations. On the other hand, the information concerning actual and observable organisational characteristics, in particular organisational form, membership/constituency, and action repertoires, was gained mostly from secondary materials.

The following section begins with an illustration of the conceptual framework of this study built upon the general insights of the new social movement approach and the typologies of Hanspeter Kriesi. After this, the path of a pro-institutionalisation trajectory of the Danish organisation and an anti-institutionalisation trajectory of the Japanese organisation will be deployed. It will later be followed by a comparative analysis of these trajectories that leads to the examination of why differences have existed between them. In the final section, then, it discusses implications of those cases for the evolution of SMOs within the institutionalisation process. In other words, it deals with the question of whether institutionalisation is inevitable for SMOs or not.

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<sup>4</sup> This tendency can typically be seen among whom advocate resource mobilisation approach, such as John McCarthy and Mayer Zald.

## The trajectory of new social movements: A conceptual frame

For the interest of this study, insights of the so-called “new social movement” approach<sup>5</sup> have been a useful tool, since the general path of the organic agriculture movement fits well for the profile of this movement category. This approach, which has been quite influential in the studies of social movements since the 1980s onwards, perceives the social movements emerged around the late 1960s to be clearly distinctive from more established movements like labour movements. In this line of argument, the novelty of these movements is detected in terms of a predominance of new middle class as constituency, unconventional action repertoires and forms of organisation based on grassroots and de-centralisation principles, and a strong ideal foundation stemmed from post-or anti- materialistic values, which, according to a number of advocates of this approach, were closely associated with existing values of left, libertarian, and emancipatory thoughts [Kriesi et al., 1995; Cohen, 1986; Offe, 1991; Habermas, 1981]. Furthermore, it frequently argues that neither the profile of new social movements resonates with working-class conflicts nor their primal focus is aimed at unequal distribution of wealth, as more traditional social movements incline to be. From this point of view, the new social movements instead highlight an emergence of new threats or risks that potentially exert harm for anybody (for instance, AIDS, pollution or radioactivity) irrespective of rich or poor [Beck, 1996].

Based on this conceptualisation, the new social movements have often comfortably been categorised as a sub-sector of the general social movement sector. Subsequently, studies of social movements particularly in Europe during a past couple of decades have characteristically pursued explanations for the emergence of such new type of movement, for instance as a new class conflict about social, cultural professionals [Kriesi et al. 1995, xix] or a struggle about colonisation of the individual lifeworld by systematic imperatives [Habermas, 1989]. Yet as currently detected by some, the peculiarity of this sub-sector has been strikingly diminishing. Especially in the West European countries, it was reported that the central gravity of the new social movements has leaned forward to a process of conventionalisation during the 1980s, and this resulted in a transformation of most of the movements to “*pragmatic reformist movements*” by the time of the late 1980s<sup>6</sup> [Kriesi et al., 1995, p.xxi].

In turn, the focus of social movement scholars recently appears to shift from explaining why the new social movements were born towards analysing why and how there has been an increasing “convergence” of the new social movement sector with more established movement sectors. A proposition posed by Hanspeter Kriesi [1996; Kriesi et al., 1995] can be placed as one of the prominent attempts at tackling upon such evolving dynamics of movement sectors in the past two decades. Taking the classic model of oligarchisation of social movement organisations (SMOs) as its conceptual basis, but significantly toning down the inevitability of such process, Kriesi suggests four transformation possibilities SMOs can take: i.e. *institutionalisation*, *commercialisation*, *involution*, and *radicalisation*. As seen in the figure stated below, the distinction between different SMO trajectories is found in two axes: their *goal orien-*

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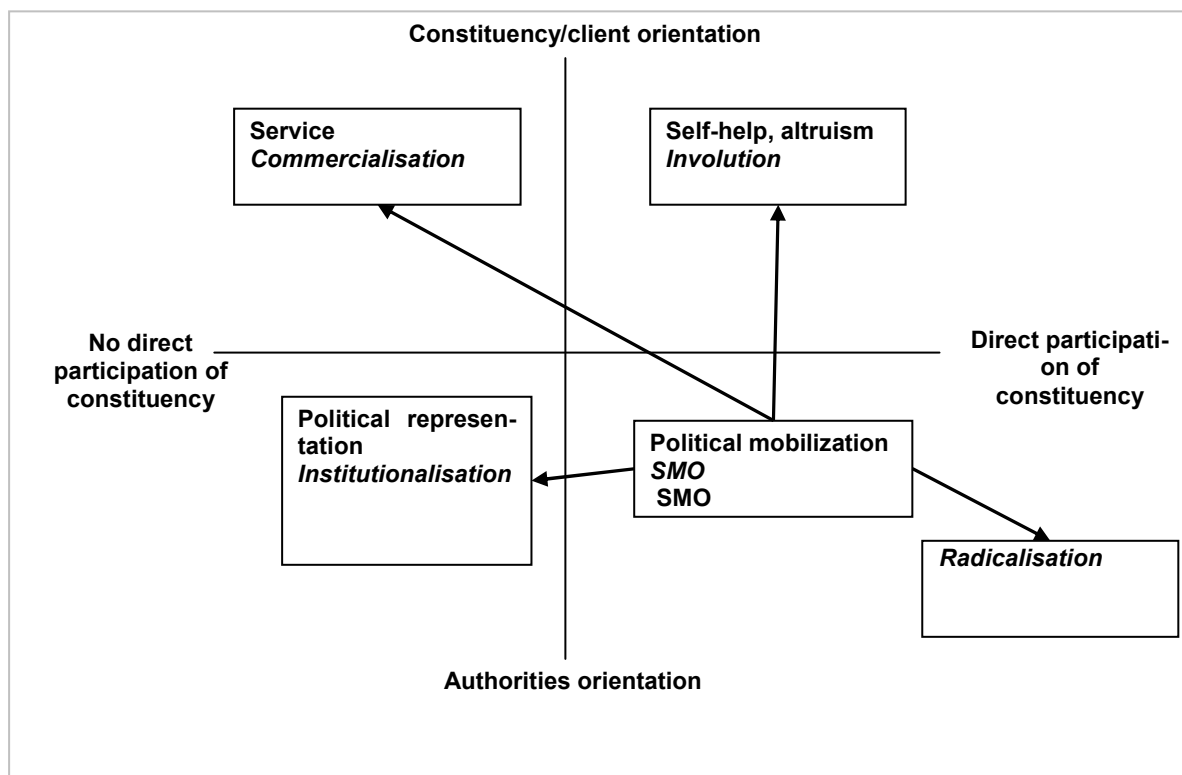
<sup>5</sup> The objective here is to illustrate several representative assumptions commonly shared by the new social movement approach. Hence, the illustration does not go further in the diversity within this approach evident among scholars, for instance, Habermas and his colleagues in the German critical school, Laclau and Mouffe of post-structural and Neo-Gramscian school, and Allain Touraine advocating sociological intervention method.

<sup>6</sup> A typical example could be the German Greens’ concession of the “anti-party party principle” that determined to reject coalition with other political parties with the object of expressing its identity as a grassroots movement.

tation towards constituency/clients or authority, on the one hand, and their action repertoires, i.e. based on *direct participation of constituency or not*, on the other hand. His typology can be encapsulated as follows:

- *Institutionalisation* characterised as a path to becoming more like a party or an interest group. It inclines to result in the moderation of its goal and its integration in the established policy channels for interest representation. While SMOs in this category hold clear political goals and thus assert their claims to authority, they do not often require direct participation of their constituency.
- *Commercialisation* characterised as a path to becoming more like a service-oriented organisation, such as friendly media, restaurants, or educational institutions, who puts remarkable weight on the provision of paid services to the members of its constituency. SMOs in this category do not particularly require direct participation of their constituency.
- *Involution* characterised as a path to becoming more like a movement association, self-help group, a voluntary association, or a club, due to the aim to cater some daily needs of constituency of the movements. SMOs in this category may involve direct participation of their constituency, but it is derived for the interest of their own constituency or client exclusively.
- *Radicalisation* characterised as a path to reinvigorated political mobilisation. SMOs in this category obtain clear political goals, and require direct participation of their constituency.

Figure 1 Typology of Kriesi<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> This figure combined two typologies of Kriesi [1996. p. 153, 157].

In the same vein, Kriesi appoints at several other key variables that can designate a trajectory of SMOs. One of these variables, *type of movement*, has been employed in this study. According to Kriesi, the type of movement can be identified through an inquiry of the general orientation (*internal or external*) and the logic of action (i.e. orientation towards *instrumentality* or *identity*) of a movement in focus. He asserts that a distinction between these factors significantly affects a direction of a movement sector vis-à-vis overall development of SMOs practicing in the sector. Taking for example, a movement oriented towards an advocacy of attaining specific collective goods or to prevent collective bads is characterised by Kriesi as an instrumentally-oriented movement. In his proposition, this type of movement inclines to pursue a most effective mobilisation of population possible in order to achieve its issue-specific goal, and for this reason, organisations exercising in this movement sector are likely to professionalize themselves as experts in this field as well as to take an external orientation by appealing their openness to new participants. Such an instrumental movement is not particularly driven by the common identity of its constituency, but rather, by certain specific features or advantages privileged only for the members of its own constituency. These propositions of Kriesi have been used as a conceptual frame of this study.





## Pro-institutionalisation trajectory: Denmark

This section onwards shifts its focus towards the empirical trail of the leading organic agriculture organisation in respective target countries, and this attempt begins with the case of the Danish Association for Organic Farming (Landsforeningen Økologisk Jordbrug: LØJ),<sup>8</sup> which this study marked as a typical example of the pro-institutionalisation trajectory. The illustration follows the organisational development chronologically, by starting on with a closest course of the establishment of this organisation.

### *Pre-organisation phase (1970s)*

Alongside the apathy of the established policy community towards agri-environmental problems, grassroots pioneers began to take off various attempts for environmentally-conscious ways of farming during the 1970s. Taking for examples, a magazine *Bio-information* was introduced by an organic farmer for the purpose of providing practical knowledge for starting organic farming in 1973. Similarly, some biodynamic farmers and their organisations started to play a role as consultant to the new organic farmers. A pivotal development was seen in 1975, when 38 individuals, who were dealing with a critique of traditional, conventional settings of agricultural business, established the *Agricultural Study Group* [Jacobsen, 2005]. The participants of the Group were basically affiliated with three different political focuses, i.e. property rights, ecology, and lifestyle. Getting inspiration from the development in the West Germany, the participants belonging to the first group set their primal focus on establishing a collective means for food production through collectively shared property rights. These people were closely affiliated to communist/socialist-orientated political currents which demonstrated the issues such as the emancipation of (farm) workers from financial institutions, the capitalist mode of development, gender discrimination etc. While the first group did not put particular stress on environment and ecology, the second group concentrated exactly on these issues. People constituting this group were the most educated in the Group, who were typically natural scientists in universities and the Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University. On the other hand, the third strand focusing on lifestyle was mostly formed by young people embedded in hippy and/or life-style movement. This group tends to prioritise traditional values around family and rural life attached to the nature by a critique of “modern” society. Furthermore, in contrast to the second, ecology-centred group taking a pragmatic, natural scientific approach to environmentally beneficial farming, this group has attached themselves to bio-dynamic farming [Lynnerup, 2003; Ingemann, 2006].

Whereas the Group maintained to function as information forum based on a loose network of a central group and local sub-groups, the difference in political focuses has caused clear disagreement among them. According to Jacobsen, members have divided particularly at the point of prioritising collective farm or ecology [Jacobsen, 2005, p.83]. This indicates environmental consciousness or a new method of farming has not been a part of the common agenda of the Group. However, it appears that this divide has later narrowed significantly by an establishment of a co-operative community in Svanholm manor (lies in the outskirts of Copenhagen) in 1978. The founding of this collective community has represented a realisation of all three objectives into practice, but by placing ecology as decisive “bond” for connecting other objectives around property rights and new life values. Consequently, the dominance of “ecologists” over the socialist groups has become evident around the very end of

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<sup>8</sup> It was named Foreningen Økologisk Jordbrug (FØJ) in the beginning. And since 2002 it changed its name to Økologisk Landsforening (ØL) as result of merger of 5 different organic related organisations.

70s, when it was only the former that could sufficiently mobilise people for forming a new group for pursuing more substantial political impacts [Jacobsen, 2005, p.87]. Meanwhile, the ecologist group has increased its tone on differentiate itself from a bio-dynamic approach, which, from its point of view, had already been given reputation as too mythical and unscientific. To avoid this and to emphasize the scientific basis of the farming methods, it began to call the farming method it envisaged as “ecological farming” [Østergaard 2003].

Albeit a general overlook of this early period of the movement indicates a success of ecology argumentation over radical politics. Yet, it must also be noted that a series of attempts by socialist groups to establish collective farm has indeed contributed to diffusing the notion of necessity among the participants to form a solid organisational basis, since such aim of collective ownership of agricultural land was not allowed under the then Agricultural Law. It was through interaction with agricultural bureaucrats that they have come to recognise such needs [Jacobsen, 2005, p.87].

### *Trajectory of an organic agriculture organisation*

In 1981 the initiative of the ecology-centred group bore fruit as the establishment of Danish Association for Organic Farming (LØJ), which turned out to be the biggest organic agriculture organisation today. The membership of the organisation, which only counted 100 people in 1982, has grown up to over 2000 in 2001 and the budget from 12,000 DKR to 24 million DKR in 2003 <sup>9</sup>[LØJ internal newsletter, April 1982: ØL, 2002: ØL, 2003]. The membership of LØJ, in principle, has been opened to farmers, food-processing companies, consumers, academics and many others, in contrast to the conventional farmers’ organisations who have traditionally performed the interest of farmers exclusively. Yet, in reality the participation of consumers has neither been remarkable nor promoted until recently, since they have been mostly considered as unreliable actor for the movement, but also as subtle contributor to the organisational economy (the consumer membership is cheaper than those for agricultural professionals).

Since the early stage of its organisational life, the organisational goal of LØJ has been aimed at becoming a reliable nation-wide organisation for the interest of organic farming with political competence. Founding upon such objective, a significant deal of organisational resource has been used for the aim of facilitating a functioning standard and control system for organic goods. This has let LØJ enjoy a near monopoly in the area of standard-building, inspection and certification for organic goods with its own organic label until 1987 (and also until the mid-1990s for organic dairy products), and hence, LØJ could largely control the way of organic sales at co-operatives, middlemen, and direct farm selling with own sales stands [Michelsen, 2001, p.70]. In a similar vein, LØJ has been keen on interacting with established actors, and this has made some substantial outcome. Taking for examples, through a close interaction with a director of the Danish Family Farmers’ Association, an organic advisory service was founded in this farmers’ union in 1985 [Lynggaard, 2001, p.92], and an agreement with the consumers’ retail co-operatives (FDB<sup>10</sup>) to sell organic products came into reality in 1993.<sup>11</sup> Yet, above all, the most symbolic could be the enactment of the Organic Foods

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<sup>9</sup> The current expansion of the budget was also derived from the merger of LØJ with the organic trade association and Organic Service Centre (see the next section).

<sup>10</sup> A consumers’ co-operative FDB has 33% of the domestic retail share with 1200 shops by running associated chains of Kvickly, Super Brugsen, Irma, and Fakta (IATP, 1998, p.33). In the meantime FDB has made a Nordic merger and carries now the name COOP.

<sup>11</sup> This negotiation has involved a large cut of the margin on organic foods by FDB.

Act in 1987 that punctuated the start of the institutionalisation of organic agriculture but it also significantly strengthened the role of LØJ as an accredited actor for this matter. Within this Act, LØJ has been appointed as a member of the Organic Foods Council (Det Økologiske Fødevareråd: OFC), together with representatives from the ministries (the Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, and the Ministry of Environment and Energy), other civil society organisations and experts. In the history of organic agriculture movement in Denmark OFC has played a crucial role as consensus-building forum between policy-makers and interest groups that, in fact, created a policy community for the issue of organic agriculture. Along with increasing awareness of the potential in organic agriculture from policy and business sides, and thus more consent among the members, OFC has set the agenda for organic agriculture as a part of national interests, as represented by its major works in the two national action plans in 1995 and 2000.

Owing much to its practical know-how in organic agricultural matters, in particular organic standards, inspection, and certification, LØJ has positioned itself well in such a policy community in the early phase of this institutionalisation process. However, along with the deepening of institutionalisation of organic agriculture, the direct influence of LØJ on the national organic agricultural sector has gradually been declining. After the Act, the state has begun to take over the task on standard-building, inspection, and crucially, certification. This indicates that organic farmers/producers no longer have to use the LØJ's self-regulative system, and what is more, their produces/products now "must" put the national organic label to be sold as organic. This has considerably replaced the predominant position of LØJ as core norm diffuser in the sector. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the implementation of so-called Organic Law in the EU (Council Regulation 2092/91) in 1993 has denoted a *de facto* extension of the decision-making arena to supra-national level, which in general suggests an increasing conflict of interests across national border.

In the latter half of the 90s, such a sliding influence of LØJ in the organic agriculture sector has become more evident as a power struggle with the state. One of the crucial events was in 1997 at the withdrawal of the Danish Dairy Board, which practically represents large dairies processing organic dairy products along with conventional ones, from the agreement to impose LØJ's inspection as obligatory for their organic production. This decision of the Danish Dairy Board meant in practice a marked reduction of the LØJ's income, since organic milk was one of a few sectors, which still had obliged the LØJ's organic inspection. Nevertheless, this incident has well reflected a reality of the organisation around that time onwards that has turned out to be inertia. According to a survey during 1995-1997, only around 33 to 36 per cent of the organic farmers were certified under the LØJ's standards [Michelsen, 2001, p.76]. By the same token, despite a drastic rise of certified organic farms in the country, the LØJ's membership of organic farmers has showed not alone dull rise since the mid-1990s, but also a remarkable decline from 2000 to 2005<sup>12</sup>. Such a limited commitment of the core actors could imply that it has been increasingly difficult for the organisation to diffuse its organic norms and values in the sector. However, the number of members increased dramatically in 2005; for the moment being it is impossible to decide whether this rise is just a coincidence or an expression of a revival of the organisation due to new tendencies among its constituency.

In December 1997, a new structural change within the organic policy community took place as a result of the entry of the Organic Foods Council (OFC) into the Agricultural Council of Denmark (ACD), which is an umbrella organisation for all Danish general and specialised

<sup>12</sup> The number of members was around 700 in 1999 and around 450 in 2004. However in 2005 the number increased to around 850. [Ingemann, 2006; Økologisk Landsforening, 2005]

agriculture organisations. At this event, LØJ had withdrawn themselves from the OFC board already before December by expressing its distinct position from organisations for conventional agriculture. This action was stemmed from a twofold tactic of LØJ to maintain its independency for constituting own values and opinions on organic agriculture, on one hand, and to remain in the system and to keep its channel to policy community, on the other hand. Subsequently, the House of Ecology was established in 1998 at the aim of gluing LØJ and Organic Service Centre (Økologisk Landscenter: OSC), which has functioned as secretariat, information centre, and coordinator for supply of organic goods [Lynggaard, 2001, p.93: Ingemann, 2006].

In March 2002 LØJ re-structured itself through the merger with OSC and five organisations representing different branches, and changed the name to ØL (Økologisk Landsforening) by deleting the term “agriculture.” It was followed by another merger of ØL with the Association of Danish Organic Processors and Suppliers (Øgruppen and Danske Økologileverandørforening) in January 2003, in order to strengthen the general capacity to deal with the issues of organic market and a development of ecology in commerce [ØL, 2003]. Notably, this internal structural change accompanied an establishment of the committee for consumers, and this has represented a strategic shift of the organisation on consumers by reversing its former indifference in them.<sup>13</sup> In consequence, an increasing deal of the resources of ØL has recently been put on consumer issues. For instance, in addition to its long-lasting publication targeting specifically practitioners of organic agriculture, it started to publish a magazine for consumer members and subscribers. Meanwhile, ØL has lobbied the government for planning the nation-wide campaigns for awakening the consumer interests on organic goods, and also organised campaigns itself, such as by setting information stands at festivals and sports events. Currently, the organisation puts a large effort on gaining more consumer members and, as a result, the number of those members rose from less than 800 in 1995 to 1900 in 2001 [ØL, 2002], though it must be noted that most of consumer members are still likely to remain as mere “subscribers” of the consumer magazine and not always “active” in the organisation.<sup>14</sup> In addition, the relationship of ØL with (other) consumer organisations has currently been consolidated through campaigns organised collectively for the issue of genetically modified foods.

#### *The formulation of the movement by LØJ*

As expressed in one of its organisational aims, “100% conversion of Danish agricultural land to organic,”<sup>15</sup> the core intention of LØJ has been to replace industrial agriculture and to push organic agriculture forward as the next mainstream. Such an expression has also represented its beliefs that such an objective is possible to realise. From the point of LØJ, organic agriculture is a scientifically solid farming method which exploits the nature’s self-sustaining system. At the pursuit of this objective, a critique of the conventional form of agri-food system at large, as envisaged by the socialist groups in its predecessor, the Agricultural Study Group, has later diminished from its central focus, when the organisation has basically chosen to seek for an integration of organic agriculture into the general agri-political and agri-industrial system for further development of the movement. The basic logic used here has been to “change the system from inside,” and in regard with this, LØJ has constantly claimed how much atti-

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with the ØL representative for consumer board, Monica Stoye. October 30, 2003.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with the ØL representative for consumer board, Monica Stoye. October 30, 2003.

<sup>15</sup> However, this organisational goal has been problematised by some members considering it is unrealistic and sends too critical message to conventional farmers. Concerning this debate, see Ingemann (2004).

tudes of bureaucrats, politicians and business actors have been changed towards an environmentally conscious direction in the last couple of decades.

Based on this approach, LØJ has been keen on establishing its position in the organic agriculture sector. The organisation has been centralised in Aarhus (the second largest city located in Jutland, which accounts for biggest agricultural yards in this country), and internal structuration has been done with facilitating departments based on specific target area and sector focus. It has targeted to create a market for organic goods. But rather than creating it separately from conventional market, LØJ has aimed to integrate it. At this point, the making of standards and reliable control system has been considered as fundament for representing a specific value of organic goods distinct from others in the market. It has, therefore, been claimed that providing transparency of production process to consumers is a most substantial key for the success of organic agriculture. In such an argument, crucially, consumers have been considered as exogenous to the organic agriculture movement.

By the same token, LØJ has been active in interacting with established actors, and an increasing resource has been used for lobbying at the national parliament and also EU institutions through the IFOAM (the International Federation for Organic Agriculture Movements) European regional group. LØJ has generally been showing to be content with its own organisational path that has developed into an integral part of the organic policy community. Similarly, it has expressed that a remarkable growth of organic agriculture and businesses, which Denmark has experienced during the last decade, could not be achieved by an effort of one organisation alone [ØL, 2000]. Yet, along with the surfacing of sliding influence in the sector, the organisation has currently started stressing its identity as independent organisational figure for the interest of organic agriculture sector. This line of effort was seen in above-mentioned several restructuring of the organisation for the aim of specifying its distinction from conventional organic agriculture organisations. Furthermore, it appears that LØJ has been currently expressing certain discontent with the growing influence of the state in organic issues. For instance, it was claimed by the organisation that “*Funding and legislation sure do support and promote organic farming, but the legislators must not take the ownership of organics. The dynamics of the (organic) sector belongs to its diversity to the dialogue and discussions on all levels.*”<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Internal document of LØJ titled *Policy initiatives promoting organic farming: Sharing of lessons*. Year is not stated.



## Anti-institutionalisation trajectory: Japan

### Trajectory of an organic agriculture organisation

Although farming without using chemicals was already practiced by some people, particularly around the members of a religious organisation, the establishment of Japan Organic Agriculture Association (JOAA) in October, 1971, is widely recognised as the distinct starting point for the Japanese organic farming movement as a mass social activism. The organisation was built at the time, when big pollution cases have been filed and the public have started to acknowledge the risk of conventional food production through increasing media coverage on danger of pesticides on human health and the reality of pesticide residues on foods, not to speak of a best-selling book *Multiple Pollution* by Sawako Ariyoshi.<sup>17</sup> In response, some consumers -particularly house wives- in big cities have begun to organise themselves in their neighbourhood to purchase vegetables, eggs, and milk produced without using pesticides. Around the same time, there have been some attempts among farmers, who often themselves experienced health problems, to reject the use of pesticides and seek for alternatives. Under this circumstance, an establishment of an organisation was eventually called for by a strong initiative of Teruo Ichiraku, who has been the former president of the Cooperative Research Institute.<sup>18</sup> This brought a unification of prominent figures for various environmentally conscious farming methods, such as Masanobu Fukuoka, a leading agricultural specialist advocating his own “nature farming method,” Giryō Yanase, a Buddhist doctor who has been asserting the effects of agricultural chemicals on human health, and Shunichi Wakatsuki, a doctor, who has been devoted to medical care in rural communities. The founding members counted 29 people. Albeit the membership has been opened to any individuals who would accept the statute of the organisation, at start, researchers in natural science, doctors and retired bureaucrats/workers for the formal agricultural agencies were overrepresented in the board.<sup>19</sup> However, JOAA has set a clear restriction on business actors to be members. It allows membership only if its nature can be considered as non-profit making such as a co-operative and a public sector agency [Ichiraku and Amano, 1988, p.55]. Furthermore, one of the organisational principles has forbidden members to participate in any political, religious and citizens’ campaigns, unless the action is agreed by all members. In addition, it has stated that main financial resources of the organisation ought to be derived from the membership fee but not from the government or profit-making enterprises. Thus any commercial advertisements on their publication/monthly newsletter have not been accepted.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *Multiple Pollution* had appeared serially in one of the major nation-wide newspapers during 1974- 1975 before it was published as a book. Ariyoshi depicted in this writing that the use of more than two different chemical substances has been damaging human and non-human health by taking up the cases of agricultural pesticide, synthetic detergent, and Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and argued their multiplying effects that made a prediction of consequences impossible.

<sup>18</sup> Cooperative Research Institute was built in 1952 and the headquarters is in Tokyo. It is a legally incorporated foundation aiming at the research of cooperatives in both Japan and abroad, the management of research archive, the facilitation of seminars, the publication including own research journal. The membership is opened to cooperatives, groups related to a cooperative, researchers, and other individuals [Cooperative Research Institute homepage, <http://www.kyodo.or.jp>].

<sup>19</sup> Obtained from homepage of the JOAA in English: <http://www.joaa.net/English/teikei.htm>. (Checked on December 1, 2003).

<sup>20</sup> Homepage of the JOAA in Japanese: <http://www.joaa.net/mokuhyou/yukinouken.html> (Checked on December 4, 2003).



While the activities of JOAA obtained an atmosphere of more like an intellectual salon between academics and experts to exchange their knowledge about a new farming method in its early days [Nakajima, 2004], some members soon after started to go into actual mobilisation by organising regional groups aiming at direct contracts between organic farmers and consumers. And this resulted in a remarkable increase of consumer membership in less than a couple of years.<sup>21</sup> This success in direct co-operation between farmers and consumers induced JOAA to construct its core organisational strategy in the name of “Teikei” (a Japanese equivalent to “cooperation”).<sup>22</sup> By definition Teikei has indicated a creation of a planned/closed economy within a group of farmers and consumers, on the basis of mutual agreements on planting and pricing. It has been claimed that, by obliging consumers to purchase all cultivated produce, farmers can expect stable income, since pricing is based on actual cost for cultivation. Teikei can further circumvent deviation of price taking place in the normal food system that mediates packing and rinsing costs, distributors and middlemen, by delivering farm produce directly to a delivery station, where consumer members come and pick up by themselves. In addition, the organisation has encouraged consumers and farmers to be interactive, and due to this involvement of consumers in farm task such as weeding has been regularly organised.

In general, JOAA has constituted a role of norm diffuser for the organic agriculture movement, while day-to-day activism has been largely found in its local groups operating Teikei. In consequence, organic agriculture and the movement in Japan have diffused primarily only around big cities, in particular those which have farm areas nearby. The principle of Teikei has in fact resulted in spotted and uneven development between regions, rather than becoming a consolidated nation-wide movement.

A gradual change has, however, been observed along with the entry of organic agriculture into a process of institutionalisation, which has become evident with the establishment of official guideline of food labelling in 1992 that stipulates the minimum standards for organic product, the product of transition period to organic methods and the product cultivated with the special methods.<sup>23</sup> It was the response of the government to a substantial growth of consumer needs on organic goods in the late 1980s, largely owing to the nuclear accident in Chernobyl. The central intention of the government at making this guideline was to control a chaos in the market filling with a flood of misleading indications as natural, clean, healthy, and green. Yet with an absence of specific regulative frame, it has merely been a window dressing effort without actual effect. Perceiving that a method of organic agriculture requires a constant development but also fundamental difficulties in cultivating totally without pesticides under the Japanese climate in general, JOAA has historically been against making an organic standard. JOAA has for this reason remained distant from politics for this early attempt of the government.

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<sup>21</sup> Since the late 1980s the number of consumer members has exceeded producers. The majority of the consumer members has been housewives [JOAA, 1988].

<sup>22</sup> Homepage of the JOAA in Japanese: <http://www.joaa.net/mokuhyou/yukinouken.html> (Checked on December 1, 2003).

<sup>23</sup> 1992's guideline settled the minimum standards for the following four categories as the crop with special cultivation: (1) Cultivation without chemical pesticides during cultivation of the product (but may use synthetic fertiliser), (2) Cultivation without synthetic fertiliser during cultivation of the product (but may use chemical pesticides), (3) Cultivation that reduced chemical pesticides to more than 50% of average farms in the same region and (4) Cultivation that reduced synthetic fertiliser to more than 50% of average farms in the same region [Mainichi Shinbun, April 19, 2001]

However in the latter half of 90s, the constituency of the organisation turned out to deem commercialisation and standardisation of organic foods as unavoidable reality. It has become acknowledged that some part of organic produce distribution have already started to extend to the general market, and a rapid increase of self-claiming pseudo-organic methods can no longer be controlled by the movement itself. Furthermore, considering core members of WTO, such as the west European countries and the USA, have already implemented official standards and CODEX under the WTO has started working on organic issue, it was a matter of time for the government to deal with more substantial national organic standards, since an absence of rigid national standards, and hence low consumer recognition of organic foodstuffs as value-added goods, has been a factor discouraging organic imports to Japan. In addition, it was also the potential entry of GM crops into the country that organisation has felt necessity of a rigid national control system. In consequence, JOAA began to formulate its own organic “basic” standards in 1996, and more detailed standards were made in 1998. Meanwhile, the organisation changed its status and registered as a state-accredited not-for-profit organisation (NPO), when government started providing certain tax benefit for this type of organisation by the enactment of new law in 1998.

When the actual process for establishing national organic standards started, a university professor, who has been closely attached to JOAA, was appointed as one of the members of the expert committee for reviewing the draft. Yet, as he later claimed, a resolution of this committee largely ignored the interests of the organic sector. Oppositional points, which the consumer representatives and the representatives of organic agriculture organisations and businesses<sup>24</sup> have jointly forwarded, were excluded from the report of the committee, and as regard the standard for processed organic foods it was settled even in the absence of specialists in organic agriculture [Honjo, 2004, p.81-83]. In response, JOAA and other organic agriculture-related actors have collectively protested against the draft. Although many issues were not corrected in the final standards, there were some marked outcomes. The standards added some local traditional techniques used in Japan, such as charcoal liquid.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, although it was still informal, the basic acceptance of exchanging organic goods within Teikei network without certification was voiced by a MAFF official at Parliament [Kubota, 2001, p.22].

Observing the development of JOAA since the late 90s, the organisation has gone a step forward to professionalisation, in contrast to its former loose organisational basis founded crucially upon a network of local consumer-farmer groups bonded mainly by Teikei. Yet, these local groups have been facing a serious decline after their peak in 80s, and according to several members, the organisation has been suffering from inertia by the weakening of these local groups. It has been discussed that such a decline in local groups owes largely to a lack of sufficient number of consumers and/or producers in a locality, an absence of leadership to organise a group [Kubota and Uozumi, 1999], an internal disagreements, or a decrease of housewives by increasing participation of women in the labour market [Hatano, 1999].

### **Formulation of the movement by JOAA**

Agri-environmental problems taken up by JOAA has attributed mainly to food-safety, such as pesticide/chemical residues on foods and risk of pesticides on health of agricultural workers,

<sup>24</sup> Some of the business actors coalesced here were operating organic trade, but still with claiming their activities as a part of movement. Hence they can be distinguished from purely profit-making actors.

<sup>25</sup> Charcoal liquid is made by cooling the gas generated at burning charcoal. It has been traditionally used as organic vermicide in Japan.

and more recently, Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), BSE, Foot and Mouth Disease. Then, JOAA has construed that the origin of such problems resides in the decay of non-materialistic values, such as humanity, in agriculture by the dominance of “modernity” as prevailing value of the society. Based on this conception, the objective of the organic agriculture movement has been claimed by JOAA as “*redirection of agriculture to what agriculture truly ought to be*”, and in the advocacy of such statement, it tends to have referred to the traditional ways of farming as close to an ideal of sustainable agriculture. Overall, the organisation has aimed to pursue this objective by organising a new agriculture system made on the basis of non-materialistic and anti-modernistic value. And such attempt has been represented by the formation of direct cooperation between farmers and consumers, called Teikei.

Such stance of JOAA has set a clear demarcation between the envisaged system of organic agriculture and the conventional mode of agricultural system. Most significantly, the organisation has envisaged a system founded totally outside the market. In addition to the point that the conventional market would reduce the value of organic goods as a mere commodity, the market system has been considered as fundamentally incapable of providing sufficient information about organic goods to consumers. Furthermore, JOAA has asserted that the missing connection between consumers and farmers in the conventional market has induced not only ignorance of consumers about agriculture, but also diminishing sense of “responsibility” to deliver safe, nutritious foods and to protect the surrounding environment. Thus, based on such critique of the market system, an alternative formulated by JOAA has excluded the basic elements of competition and trade. It has stated that the price of produce should be decided on the basis of mutual contracts between farmers and consumers, and transaction of money should not be understood as ordinary purchase but as a “reward” to the farmer.

Frequently, JOAA’s critique of conventional agriculture has referred to resource dependency of the conventional farming system on imports (such as dependency on oil import for producing pesticides). In the same vein, the organisation has stressed the increasing food imports that have been endangering the “*survival*” of domestic agriculture and eventually that of Japanese citizens [JOAA, 1988, p.1]. This indicates its advocacy of organic agriculture as an interest of Japanese society at large.

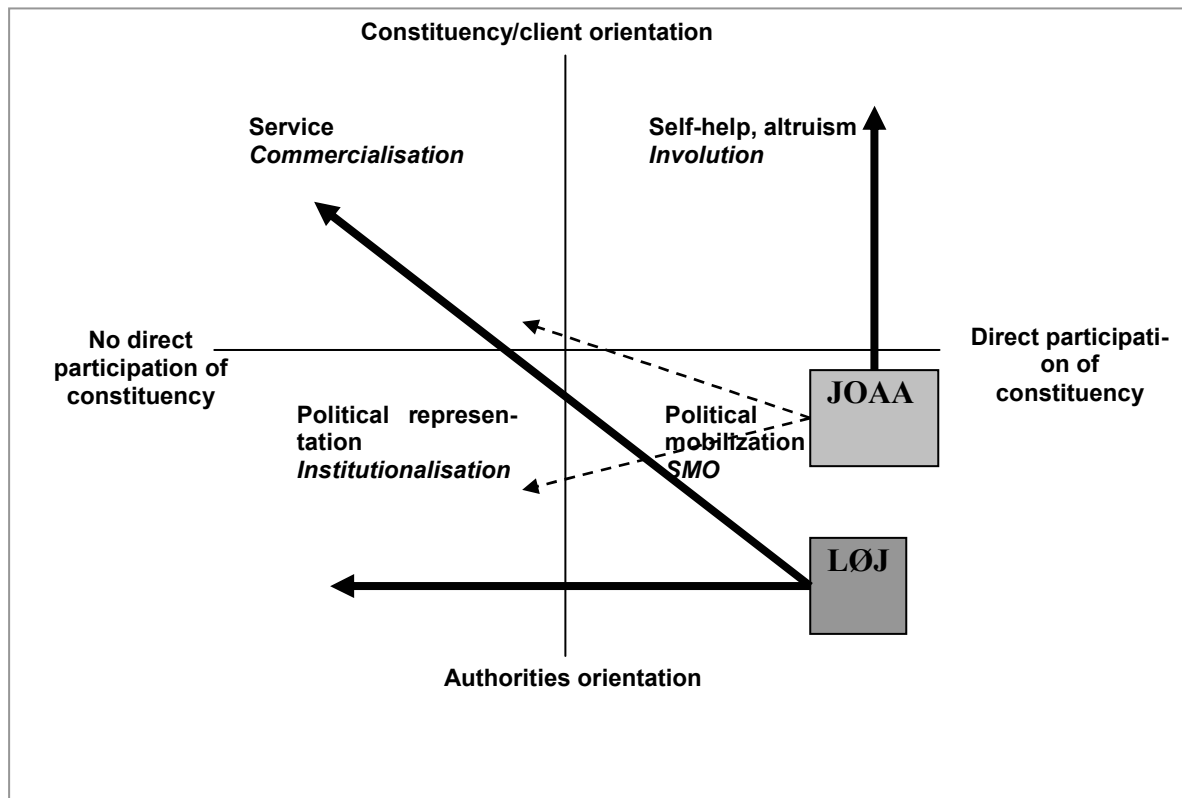
Reflecting its contentious standpoint, political institutions and business actors have been depicted by JOAA as unreliable actors for the organic agriculture movement to collaborate with. Moreover, some tough voices in the organisation have claimed that the actions and aims of such actors are the most dominant among contemporary agri-environmental problems. Based on distrust of established institutions, then, JOAA has put strong emphasis on circumventing any financial and political help from political and business organisations to ensure own organisational autonomy.

## Findings

The analysis of these cases of LØJ and JOAA made use of the above-mentioned conception of Kriesi, though with some elaboration. First of all, based on his typology of Social Movement Organisation's (SMO's) trajectory, this study has detected striking differences, but at the same time, a current evidence of closing the gap between them. The case of LØJ has demonstrated an organisational change from its original stance as a SMO, which aims at authority and mobilisation via direct participation of its constituency, towards two directions: firstly, a direction towards *political representation* as typically seen in lobbying as its action repertoire, and thus, according to Kriesi, also towards *institutionalisation*. This has directed a major focus of the organisation towards authority and professionalisation with the object of being acknowledged by authority, whilst it has been followed by a decline of direct participation and commitment of members to day-to-day basis organisational activities. Secondly, the empirical evidence showed that LØJ has turned out to facilitate a function as *service* organisation for its members, such as advisory service and, most remarkably, organic standards, control and certification system. In this context, relations between LØJ and its members have become more like a business-client relationship, and borrowing the conception of Kriesi, such trend can be embedded in the direction of *commercialisation*.

By contrast, this study found the trajectory of JOAA fit well for the category of *involution*, which is depicted by Kriesi as movement associations, self-help group, voluntary association, and club. According to him, the significant distinction between this organisational life and SMO is that the orientation of the former leans toward constituency or clients, while the focus of the latter tends to be authority by perceiving such actor as its main target. As seen in the experience of JOAA with direct cooperation between farmers and consumers, this organisation has required the deep commitment of its members to organisational activities. On the other hand, the organisation has, until quite recently, kept its distance from institutional politics and refrained itself from any kind of political involvement with other actors. These aspects suggest that JOAA has a strong tendency of dealing with issues within its constituency, rather than taking action towards authority, in most parts of its organisational history. However, this study has also detected a current change in such JOAA's trajectory. Since the late 1990s it is likely that the organisation has gone a step forward to two other directions of the Kriesi's typology, namely, *service (commercialisation)* and *political representation (institutionalisation)*. The evidence of the former was typically seen in the establishment of its own organic standards and facilitation of a series of projects, such as provision of GM-free seed project, that the members can make use of. As regard the latter, i.e. political representation, the new tendency has become evident with the organisation's protest against the national organic standards and, more recently, cooperation with parliamentary members aiming at the establishment of a national law on sustainable agriculture embodying support mechanism for environmentally-friendly farming. Through this process, JOAA has undergone internal restructuring and professionalisation by becoming a governmental accredited not-for-profit organisation and by facilitating different specialised branches and educational tasks (e.g. seminars), albeit the development of these observed in JOAA has still been preliminary in comparison with LØJ.

Figure 2 LØJ and JOAA in Kriesi's typology



Shifting focus to another typology of Kriesi on type of movement (i.e. either the logic of action is instrumentally oriented or identity oriented), this study has basically determined both LØJ and JOAA as being oriented towards more *instrumental* direction. Both organisations have clearly claimed organic agriculture movement as an activism for achieving collective goods, such as clean environment and safe food. However, it also found that their instrumental focus was markedly different. LØJ has envisaged representing an interest of organic farmers or that of the organic agriculture sector as a sub-sector of the general agricultural sector. For this aim, the emphasis of LØJ has clearly been pointed towards an integration of organic agriculture into the conventional system. By contrast, JOAA has in fact not particularly dealt with an interest of the agricultural sector, but rather an interest of the organic agriculture “movement” sector as a sub-sector of the general social movement sector, though it must be noted that its embedment in the general movement sector has been quite shallow owing to the restrictive organisational policy on interacting with other actors. For JOAA the movement was also about survival of national food sovereignty at stake for the global competition, and this point has been advocated as an interest of citizens at large.

In addition, while Kriesi suggests that the distinction of orientation to instrumentality or identity to be “one way or the other,” this study acknowledged that it could be more fruitful to maintain focus on the identity aspect, since this aspect has not only been evident but also indicated a crucial point of their difference, i.e. “whom the organisation has tried to address and mobilise.” Such aspect is closely connected to the above-mentioned point on the orientation towards agricultural sector or social movement sector. Examining the cases, it appears that LØJ has mainly intended to mobilise farmers and other actors in the general agri-political and agri-industrial complexes, rather than non-agricultural actors such as consumers. By contrast, the main target of JOAA has been consumers and dedicated farmers. This could indicate fun-

damental difference in the organisational fields between these two, wherein they found their place for mobilisation. That is to say, for LØJ it has been the agricultural sector, while it has been the civil society at large for JOAA.

On the other hand, with regard to the other factor of movement type posed by Kriesi- i.e. openness (external orientation) or closeness(internal orientation) of a movement, this study examined the general orientation of LØJ as open and JOAA as closed. Focusing on their membership requirements, LØJ has not set particular restriction on it, and it has been keen on interacting with external actors. To the contrary, JOAA has closed its membership to profit-making actors and institutional political actors. Furthermore, albeit its membership has been opened to basically anyone else than those actors, it was predominantly personal networks that contributed to the actual membership growth. As result, JOAA has turned out to constitute a closed community. Yet again, it can be mentioned that the openness of LØJ to consumers was in practice limited until recently, and a large part of consumer involvements still appears to remain as subscriber of the organisation's magazine.

The table below pinpoints the above-mentioned elements of differences observed in the factors of Kriesi's movement type.

*Differences in the factors of Movement Type between LØJ and JOAA 1*

	<b><i>Instrumentally oriented logic of action</i></b>	<b><i>Identity oriented logic of action</i></b>	<b><i>Openness or closeness</i></b>
<b>LØJ</b>	Interest of agriculture sector	Agricultural community	Open/External
<b>JOAA</b>	Interest of citizens (consumers-farmers) , Food sovereignty	Consumer-farmer movement	Closed/Internal

All in all, this study has revealed fundamentally different formulations of organic agriculture and the movement by these organisations as a cause of them choosing contradictory trajectories of organic agriculture movement. What is more, the experience of these organisations has attested the relations between such fundamentally different formulations, and thus different objectives and means of the organisations, and the actual evolution of organisational trajectory. The conceptualisation and advocacy of organic agriculture by LØJ has largely resided in scientific reasoning founded upon the emerging discipline of agroecology and, based on such reasoning, the plausibility of this farming method as a future mainstream. In such approach, organic agriculture has been expressed with pragmatic tone by eschewing vague romanticism or non-science-based explanations, as it appears to be the case for the existing bio-dynamic farming community. Based on such pragmatic orientation and its goal to replace conventional industrial farming, the major focus of LØJ has tended toward the actors in the agricultural sector as well as those in the policy system. Considering these aspects, it is not surprising that LØJ has attempted to integrate itself in the general framework of the agricultural community and the institutional politics through professionalisation, lobbying and the participation to the OFC. Yet, along with the remarkable taking-over of its functions, such as the maintenance of organic standards and consultancy, and researches, by the state agencies and other private actors (e.g. the general farmers' union(s)), LØJ has been suffering from new struggle for maintaining own identity and value as an organisation for the interest of organic agriculture.

Then, it does not seem accident that LØJ has currently widened its target group from agricultural actors to consumers, for the purpose of re-establishing its position in the civil society.

On the other hand, the case of JOAA demonstrated quite dissimilar formulation of organic agriculture. The founding problematic for JOAA has stemmed exclusively from the deterioration of food safety, and such problem was understood as bi-product of the dominant national project for “modernity”, represented by industrialisation and urbanisation, that have been imposed in the post-war era. Based on such explicit critique of the overall modernisation project, and, crucially, its focus on health of both farmers and consumers, JOAA has problematised the all level of conventional agri-food system from production to distribution and consumption. Subsequently, solutions were sought in establishing an alternative, basically by rejecting the general concepts of which the modern agri-industrial system is founded upon. This has led JOAA to construct its foundation in trust-based networks between dedicated farmers and consumers bound in direct agreements of production and purchase outside the market. Unlike LØJ, the narratives of JOAA have obtained the elements of romanticism, in the sense it presupposes human to be co-operative, and also of survivalism by emphasising the fear of losing national food security and sovereignty as potential path to the collapse of the nation. On the whole, its general condemnation of the “system”, in the Habermasian sense, as supporter of the modernisation project has directed JOAA to take distance from institutional political actors and business actors. Interestingly, this cautious stance of JOAA has extended to other actors in the civil society, and such aspect can crucially indicate particularity of an organisation that goes beyond the typologisation drawn by Kriesi as well as the straight-forward perception of SMOs as interest maximizer. JOAA may have given more substantial impact on the society if it opened its door to the wider public than the closed network community. However, such option was not taken by JOAA. Furthermore, the case of both LØJ and JOAA laid open the reality of limited autonomy of organisations as external institutionalisation, typically punctuated by the establishment of national organic law, was once set in motion. One interpretation of such process of institutionalisation could be social appropriation of SMOs, while for others it may look more like a series of unintended consequences which a SMO pulled the trigger but no longer can control.

With regard to such pragmatic orientation of LØJ, the existence of the Agricultural Study Group in the 1970s and the eventual “victory” of ecologists over other sub-groups of socialists and life-style seekers appear to be of uttermost importance.

## **Implications**

These findings could open up a new question - why did the organisation formulate the movement in that particular way? Albeit answering this question is so far beyond the reach of this study, several implications can be made. First of all, it can be presumed that the trajectory of LØJ has already been set by the outcome of its predecessor, perhaps most directly, the Agricultural Study Group. As interactions took place among the different groups with distinct objectives of alternative agriculture, it has become evident that the advocacy of ecology has gained victory over other two sub-groups of socialists and life-style seekers. This resolution around ecologists’ focus in the 1970s has given direct impact on LØJ’s formulation of organic agriculture as scientifically plausible alternative to conventional farming. Furthermore, the foundation of pragmatic, reformist tendency of this organisation can also be found in the experience of socialist groups, who has already attempted to negotiate the issue of collective property right with the state authority. It appears that such experience made organic activists realise the necessity for organisational competence [Jacobsen, 2005] like existing professional agricultural organisations.

Furthermore, trajectory could further trace back to the historical context of the country, for instance, economic/societal significance of agriculture and strength of social movement vis-à-vis the state. Such historical factors have doubtlessly designated the trajectory of SMOs in a given country, since they were likely to constitute a conceptual template that emerging organisations could reflect upon at defining how an envisaged movement should look like. Thus, having formulated organic agriculture as a new interest of the agriculture sector, LØJ has been influenced by the culture of this sector, which has traditionally strongly connected to the state authority. By the same token, the central focus of JOAA on the civil society, or farmer-consumer relations, can suggest that traditional and contemporaneous practices of social movements in this country (could) have affected the organisational direction. Yet, it may also be due to the absence of strong tradition in social movement in Japan <sup>26</sup> that the organisation has not particularly been influenced by the external actors, and thus could maintain its relative autonomy for a long time.

On the other hand, this study has also detected another crucial point. That is to say, an anti-institutionalisation organisation like JOAA has no longer been free from the process of institutionalisation. It must be noted that the attempt of JOAA for political representation and service-oriented function is still new, and particularly regarding its orientation towards service, the tendency has been observed only weakly when the organisation continues to require direct participation of constituency and the principle of non-profit making. Yet, such an outward transformation of typically closed, voluntary, and apolitical organisation towards participation in institutional politics and professionalisation can, at least, suggest that the external institutionalisation imposed by the state and the national/international neo-liberal market order has constrained the continuance of its original organisational life. This point appears to confirm a well-known process of organisational isomorphism in this social movement sector. However, at the same time, two alternative hypotheses to such traditional conception of iron cage could be made through the findings of this study. Firstly, an organisation can potentially maintain substantial part of its autonomous development by avoiding creating business-client relationship with its constituency. In a similar vein, it can be presumed that an organisation can keep some degree of its autonomy by achieving internal institutionalisation (e.g. membership growth, professionalisation, establishment of network with other actors) with maintaining direct participation of its member to organisational practices. These two hypotheses imply that a critical juncture for organic agriculture organisations resides in the decision of taking service-orientation and/or compromising direct participation of its constituency, at the face of internal and external environmental changes, i.e. inertia of organisation or increasing opportunity. Nevertheless, the view of “reality” is clearly different from the inevitable process of iron cage when one perceives institutionalisation as diverse and reflexive social process that is contingent upon specific time and surrounding environment.

<sup>26</sup> This aspect can also refer to a weak potential of the Left as coalition partner for new social movement. For instance, the coalition of the environmental activists with the left-wing political parties diminished in the 1970s.





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